

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A portable memory device for a USB-supporting data processing system, the memory device comprising:
 - a USB connector for being connected to a USB port of the data processing system;
 - an integrated circuit memory for writing/reading data;
 - a connector cover protecting the USB connector from damage, the connector cover capable of sliding automatically backwards upon insertion of the portable memory device into said USB port exposing the USB connector; and
 - a USB interface coupled between the USB connector and the memory, for interfacing the memory with the data processing system.
2. (Original) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory is a nonvolatile semiconductor memory.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Original) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory device is worked as a portable memory device of the data processing system.
5. (Original) The memory device of claim 1, wherein the memory device supports a plug and play function, and the USB connector is capable of being connected and separated to/from the USB port of the data processing system while the data processing system is powered on.

6. (Original) The memory device of claim **1**, wherein the memory device stores a security information.

7. (Original) The memory device of claim **6**, wherein the data processing system stores a security information to verify an authorized user.

8. (Original) The memory device of claim **7**, wherein the data processing system starts to work when the security information of the memory device is matched with the security information of the data processing system.

Claims **9 - 15** (Canceled)

Claims **16 - 20** (Canceled)

21. (Previously Presented) The device of claim **1**, wherein backwards is a direction that is opposite to a direction of insertion of said memory device into said USB port.

22. (Currently Amended) The device of claim **1**, further comprising a spring coupled between said connector cover and a housing of the device, ~~said spring being biased to push said cover away from said housing to cover said integrated circuit memory when no pressure is applied to said spring.~~

23. (Previously Presented) The device of claim **22**, said spring being compressed upon attachment of said portable memory device to said USB port.

24. (Currently Amended) The device of claim ~~4~~ **22**, said cover having a ridge protruding from a side portion of said cover that engages a concave groove in said housing enabling said cover to slide forwards and backwards with respect to said housing.

25. (Previously Presented) A method of securing a host computer, comprising

the steps of:

- applying power to the host computer;
- determining whether a USB security device is attached to a USB port on the host;
- displaying an error message when it is determined that the USB security device is not attached to the USB port of the host;
- reading a password from the USB security device and comparing the read password with a password stored in the host;
- displaying an error message when the password on the USB security device does not match the password stored in the host and preventing the host from being booted when the password on the USB security device does not match the password stored in the host;
- booting up the host computer only when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host and only when the password stored in the USB security device matches the password stored in the host computer; and
- attaching the USB security device to the USB port of the host computer prior to when power is applied to the host, said attaching step comprising automatically sliding a cover on said USB security device backward in a direction opposite to a direction of inserting the USB security device into the USB port when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host computer.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **25**, further comprising the step of enabling a hard disk drive in the host only when the USB security device is attached to the USB port of the host and only when the password stored in the USB security device matches the password stored in the host computer.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **25**, said booting step comprising loading an operating system in the host.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim **25**, said reading and comparing step being performed prior to when the host computer is booted up.

Claims **29-30** (Canceled)

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim **25**, wherein the USB security device ~~comprising~~comprises:

- a USB connector for being connected to the USB port of the host computer;
- an integrated circuit memory for writing/reading data;
- a connector cover protecting the USB connector from damage, the connector cover capable of sliding automatically backwards upon insertion of the portable memory device into said USB port exposing the USB connector; and
- a USB interface coupled between the USB connector and the memory, for interfacing the memory with the data processing system.

32. (Previously Presented) The portable memory device of claim **1**, the portable memory device being used to securing a host computer according to a process comprising the steps of:

- applying power to the host computer;
- determining whether a portable memory device is attached to a USB port on the host;
- displaying an error message when it is determined that the portable memory device is not attached to the USB port of the host;
- reading a password from the portable memory device and comparing the read password with a password stored in the host;
- displaying an error message when the password on the portable memory device does not match the password stored in the host and preventing the host from being booted when the password on the portable memory device does not match the password stored in the host; and
- booting up the host computer only when the portable memory device is attached to the USB port of the host and only when the password stored in the portable memory device matches the password stored in the host computer.

33. (New) A portable memory device for a USB-supporting data processing system, the memory device comprising:

a USB connector to be connected to a USB port of the data processing system;
an integrated circuit memory to write/read data;
a USB interface coupled between the USB connector and the memory, to interface the memory with the data processing system; and
an automatically retractable cover having a rectangular cross-section to protect the USB connector from damage when the portable memory device is not connected to the USB-supporting data processing system,
wherein the portable memory device comprises a hole to accommodate a key ring.

34. (New) The portable memory device of claim 33, further comprising a flat ledge, wherein the retractable cover is a sliding retractable cover, wherein the retractable sliding cover when retracted exposes the USB connector and when not retracted covers the USB connector, and wherein the retractable sliding cover when retracted slides onto the flat ledge to accommodate the retractable sliding cover while permitting exposure of the USB connector sufficient to be connected to the USB port.

35. (New) The portable memory device of claim 33, further comprising a housing to accommodate the memory and the USB interface.

36. (New) The portable memory device of claim 34, further comprising a housing to accommodate the memory and the USB interface.

37. (New) The portable memory device of claim 36, wherein the flat ledge has an overall thickness less than an overall thickness of the housing and the flat ledge is attached to the USB connector at an end and to the housing or the USB interface at another end.

38. (New) The portable memory device of claim 37, wherein the cover has an overall interior opening of a thickness greater than the overall thickness of the flat ledge.

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39. (New) The portable memory device of claim **38**, wherein the flat ledge further comprises a spring or a groove and the cover, the housing, the USB connector and the flat ledge have a rectangular cross-sectional shape.

40. (New) The portable memory device of claim **39**, wherein the hole has an oval shape.

41. (New) The portable memory device of claim **38**, wherein the thickness of the retractable cover equals the overall thickness of the housing minus the overall thickness of the flat ledge.

42. (New) The portable memory device of claim **41**, wherein an overall outer thickness of the retractable cover equals the overall thickness of the housing.